

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 OIC-02 EURE-00 SSO-00
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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4142
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AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OSLO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 1681

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, OCON, AWACS, MILI, DA
SUBJECT: DANISH RESERVATIONS ON AWACS

REF: SECSTATE 061945, DTG 192110Z MAR 77

SUMMARY: DURING A FRANK DISCUSSION OF POINTS CONTAINED
IN REFERENCE, MR. P.V. CHRISTIANSEN, MOD PERMANENT
UNDERSECRETARY DESIGNATE, WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT DANISH
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ABILITY TO SUPPORT "BOTTOM LINE" COMMITMENT TO AWACS IN
THE FOLKETING BEFORE MAY 17 DPC. HE STATED THAT MOD MOLLER
WAS EXTREMELY HESITANT TO DISCUSS SUCH A VOLATILE POLITICAL
ISSUE SO SOON ON HEELS OF DIFFICULT DEFENSE AGREEMENT NEGOTI-
ATIONS AND WITH THE F-16 QUESTION STILL POLITICALLY UNRE-
SOLVED. CHRISTIANSEN BELIEVES THAT MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT
AWACS, SUCH AS FOLLOW-ON OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING OF DANISH LOW-LEVEL RADAR, ARE STILL UNRESOLVED, MAKING FULL COMMITMENT TO AWACS IMPROBABLE NOW. END SUMMARY

1. MR. P. V. CHRISTIANSEN, NEWLY APPOINTED MOD PERMANENT UNDERSECRETARY, WAS CHARACTERISTICALLY NON-COMMITTAL ABOUT DANISH POSITION ON AWACS AT MARCH 25 DPC. CHRISTIANSEN, WHO WILL ASSIST DANISH AMBASSADOR SVART IN AWACS DISCUSSIONS IN MOD MOLLER'S ABSENCE, WAS KEENLY AWARE OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR FULL NATO SUPPORT OF AWACS AND UNDERSTOOD FULLY THE IMPORTANT ROLE DENMARK WOULD PLAY IN THIS ISSUE. HOWEVER, HE WAS QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT MOD MOLLER WAS NOT INTERESTED IN PRESENTING THE AWACS ISSUE TO THE FOLKETING SO SOON AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF HEATED AND DRAWN-OUT INTER-PARTY DEBATES ON THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT AND WITH THE F-16 PROGRAM STILL POLITICALLY UNRESOLVED.

2. CHRISTIANSEN ENUMERATED SEVERAL POINTS ON AWACS THAT WERE YET UNANSWERED TO DENMARK'S SATISFACTION. THESE QUESTIONS WERE: (1) THE EXTENT OF DENMARK'S FUTURE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE COST OBLIGATIONS; (2) INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING OF DENMARK'S LOW-LEVEL RADAR PROGRAM. CHRISTIANSEN STATED THAT, CONSIDERING THE PRESENT AND FORECAST BURDENT OF THE F-16 AND OTHER HIGH-PRIORITY DEFENSE PROGRAMS, MOD MOLLER FELT IT AN INOPPORTUNE TIME TO PRESENT ANOTHER CONTROVERSIAL DEFENSE PROGRAM BEFORE THE FOLKETING. WHEN ASKED WHAT DENMARK'S POSITION WOULD BE AT THE MARCH 25 MEETING IN BRUSSELS, CHRISTIANSEN

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BLUNTLY STATED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW. WHEN REMINDED OF DENMARK'S PREVIOUS COMMITMENT THAT, QUOTE AS A MINIMUM DENMARK WOULD SUPPORT AWACS THROUGH INTEGRATION INTO GROUND ENVIRONMENT RADAR UNQUOTE, CHRISTIANSEN COMMENTED THAT HE WAS AWARE OF THAT STATEMENT BUT THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED TO MEAN THAT MOD MOLLER WAS NOW PREPARED TO PRESENT THE PROGRAM TO THE FOLKETING.

3. COMMENT. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT DENMARK'S POSITION ON AWACS NOW IS ONE OF CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEED FOR ITS COMMITMENT AT THE MARCH 25 MEETING. BUT, BECAUSE OF MOD MOLLER'S PRESENT POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES WITHIN HIS OWN PARTY CONCERNING THE F-16 PROGRAM, AND DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN CONCLUDING THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS, HE IS RELUCTANT TO ENTER ANOTHER CONTROVERSY AT THIS TIME. HOWEVER, DENMARK DOES NOT WANT TO BE SINGLED OUT AS AN OBSTRUCTIONIST IN THIS IMPORTANT NATO PROGRAM AND WILL PROBABLY GO ALONG WITH AN ULTIMATE NATO DECISION

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BUT WILL NOT TAKE A LEAD IN MAKING IT. WE ARE AWARE THAT AWACS
QUESTION WILL BE RAISED IN THE FOLKETING WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 23, BY A SPOKESMAN OF ONE OF THE LEFTIST PARTIES. HE WILL
RECALL MOLLER'S EARLIER STATEMENTS THAT DENMARK WOULD
NOT PARTICIPATE IN AWACS AT ALL. THE PROBLEM FOR
MOLLER NOW IS HOW TO EXPLAIN A REVERSAL OF HIS PREVI-
OUS POSITION. HE MAY ALSO HAVE CONLCUED THAT,
CONSIDERING THE PRESENT UNCERTAINTY OF THE WHOLE
AWACS ISSUE, HE MAY BE ABLE TO FINESSE THE QUESTION
FOR THE TIME BEING.
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